

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A firearm comprising:
 a housing constructed substantially from non-magnetic material and
defining an opening;
 a dust cover to cover the opening in the housing, the dust cover being
pivotal between an open position and a closed position; and
 a magnetic lock to secure the dust cover in the closed position.
2. A firearm as defined in claim 1 wherein the housing is
constructed from plastic.
3. A firearm as defined in claim 1 wherein the magnetic lock
comprises:
 a magnetic strip mounted to at least one of the housing and the
dustcover; and
 at least one magnetic pin mounted to the other one of the housing and
the dust cover to attract the magnetic strip.
4. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic strip is
embedded in the dust cover.

5. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic strip is embedded in the housing.
6. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic strip is constructed from sheet metal.
7. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic strip is crimped in at least one location along its length.
8. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic strip is embedded in a side of the dust cover that faces the housing when the dust cover is in the closed position.
9. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic strip is attached to a side of the dust cover that faces the housing when the dust cover is in the closed position.
10. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the at least one magnetic pin has a longitudinal axis, and the at least one magnetic pin is embedded in the housing with the longitudinal axis substantially perpendicular to the magnetic strip when the dust cover is in the closed position.

11. A firearm as defined in claim 10 wherein an end of the at least one magnetic pin is generally flush with a side of the housing.

12. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the at least one magnetic pin includes three magnetic pins distributed along an edge of the opening.

13. A firearm as defined in claim 12 wherein:
a first one of the magnetic pins is located near a first end of the edge of the opening;
a second one of the magnetic pins is located near a second end of the edge of the opening; and
a third one of the magnetic pins is located between the first and second magnetic pins.

14. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the ones of the magnetic pins are arranged such that magnetic fields for adjacent magnetic pins point in substantially opposite directions.

15. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the magnetic pins are arranged such that magnetic fields for the magnetic pins point in substantially the same direction.

16. A firearm as defined in claim 3 wherein the at least one magnetic pin is at least one of injected into the housing, adhered to the housing, and welded to the housing.

17. A firearm as defined in claim 1 wherein the dust cover is biased toward the open position by a spring.

18. A firearm as defined in claim 1 wherein the opening is an ejection opening.

19. A firearm as defined in claim 1 wherein the dust cover is pivoted from the closed position to the open position in response to a recoil movement of a breechblock.

20. A firearm as defined in claim 1 further comprising:
a second opening defined in the housing;
a second dust cover to cover the second opening in the housing, the second dust cover being pivotable between an open position and a closed position; and
a second magnetic lock to secure the second dust cover in the closed position.

21. A firearm as defined in claim 1 wherein the opening comprises a first opening, and further comprising a second opening, wherein the dust

cover covers the first and the second opening when the dust cover is in the closed position.

22. A method of operating a firearm comprising:

moving a breechblock from a forward position to a rearward position;

pivoting a dust cover under the influence of a closing spring from a closed position to an open position in response to the movement of the breechblock

pivoting the dust cover from the open position to the closed position;

and

securing the dust cover in the closed position with a magnetic lock.

23. A method for manufacturing a firearm comprising:

covering an opening in a housing with a dust cover positioned to pivot open in response to a motion of a breechblock;

securing an edge of the dust cover to allow the dust cover to pivot between an open position and a closed position such that the dust cover is biased to the open position by a spring; and

using at least one magnetic field to attract the dust cover to the housing such that the dust cover is locked in the closed position.